



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

FORENSIC AUTOPSY ASSISTANT
SENIOR FORENSIC AUTOPSY ASSISTANT

Class No. 004820
Class No. 004819

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

Under general supervision, to assist Deputy Medical Examiners with autopsies; to accept, process, and release deceased persons; and to perform related work as required.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Positions in this class series are found exclusively in the Medical Examiner's Office. Incumbents in these classes perform a variety of autopsy and examining room duties, which involve the handling, weighing, storing, and transporting of bodies, organs, tissues and evidence. Some positions perform embalming.

Forensic Autopsy Assistant:

This is the entry and journey level class in the series. Incumbents, under general supervision, assist Deputy Medical Examiners, Forensic Pathology Fellows, and physician residents with autopsies.

Senior Forensic Autopsy Assistant:

This is the lead level class of the series. Under general supervision, incumbents in this class act as lead workers providing technical guidance and training to subordinate class members. This class is distinguished from the next highest class, Autopsy Room Supervisor, in that the latter supervises, schedules, and trains all personnel who are assigned autopsy room duties.

■ FUNCTIONS

The examples of functions listed in the class specification(s) are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the class(es). Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.

Forensic Autopsy Assistant

Essential Functions:

1. Prepares autopsy instruments and equipment for Deputy Medical Examiners or other pathologists performing autopsies.
2. Assists in the performance of autopsies including organ weighing, specimen collection, preservation and storing.
3. Transports collected specimens to the toxicology and histopathology laboratories.
4. Collects evidence taken during a homicide autopsy.
5. Fingerprints, photographs, and X-rays decedents.
6. Develops X-rays.
7. Assists in decedent receipt and release.
8. Lifts and transports decedents within building by hand and/or equipment.
9. Prepares decedents for autopsy.
10. Performs sanitation and housekeeping duties in the examining room and morgue.
11. Prepares written record of daily work activities.
12. Maintains logs, X-rays, charts, and other evidence.

13. May serve as, a witness in court regarding procedures performed.
14. Dispatches Medical Examiner Investigators when required.
15. Provides responsive, high quality service to County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public by providing accurate, complete and up-to-date information, in a courteous, efficient and timely manner.

Non-Essential Functions:

1. May embalm decedents.

Senior Forensic Autopsy Assistant

Essential Functions:

All the duties listed above and

1. Schedules and oversees the examining room activities in the absence of the Autopsy Room Supervisor or on an assigned shift.
2. Assists in the training of personnel.

■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

The following apply to all classes:

- X-ray photography and developing.
- Autopsy techniques.
- Practice of specimen collection, preservation, and storage.
- Statutes, ordinances, policies, and regulation relating to a Medical Examiner and/or Coroner's operation.
- Pathology, bacteriology, and hygiene, including sanitation and public health.
- Judicial requirements and laboratory techniques and policies regarding the chain of custody for evidence handling and preservation.
- Human anatomy.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

Skills and Abilities to:

The following apply to all classes:

- Use special equipment and instruments required for autopsies and specimen collection.
- Take and develop X-rays.
- Photograph decedents and evidence.
- Collect and label specimens for laboratory examination.
- Collect and preserve evidence taken during a homicide autopsy, and other law-enforcement related deaths.
- Observe and report upon conditions found while handling a decedent, which may be of value in an autopsy investigation.
- Keep logs and records.
- Assist pathologists in the performance of autopsies.
- Communicate effectively orally and in writing.
- Establish effective working relationships with management, employees, employee representatives and the public representing diverse cultures and backgrounds.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Assess the customer's immediate needs and ensure customer's receipt of needed services through personal service or referral.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

Senior Forensic Autopsy Assistant (in addition to the above):

- Act as a shift leader.
- Provide technical guidance and training to subordinate Forensic Autopsy Assistants.

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

Possession of a current, valid California Embalmer's License AND:

Forensic Autopsy Assistant:

1. Experience as a journey level embalmer, having embalmed approximately 150 cases within the past five (5) years, including coroner-type cases (motor vehicle fatalities, homicides, suicide, decomposed bodies), AND, experience in pathological/forensic techniques, OR
2. At least two (2) years of experience working with a medical examiner/coroner's office, or as a diener, assisting with autopsies, which involved direct contact with deceased persons.

Senior Forensic Autopsy Assistant:

1. At least two (2) years of experience as a Forensic Autopsy Assistant in the County of San Diego, or its equivalent in a Medical Examiner's or Coroner's office.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classification(s). Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.

Continuous upward and downward flexion of the neck. Frequent: repetitive use of hands, standing, bending and twisting of neck, bending and twisting of waist, simple grasping, reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying. Incumbents may be required to assist with the movement and lifting of heavy bodies.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

Possession of a valid California Embalmer's License is required.

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

Certification/Registration

None Required.

Working Conditions

Exposure to deceased persons, caustic chemicals and fumes, decayed tissue, and noxious odors.
May be required to work shifts.

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Felony convictions will be disqualifying. Misdemeanor convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a thorough background investigation which may include a psychological, polygraph or other examination or test.

Probationary Period

Forensic Autopsy Assistant:

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in this class shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

Senior Forensic Autopsy Assistant:

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in this class shall serve a probationary period of 6 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

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Forensic Autopsy Assistant (Class No. 004820)
Senior Forensic Autopsy Assistant (Class No. 004819)

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